

Middle East. It took a great courage, in my opinion, for President Clinton to have called Mr. Arafat and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and King Hussein to the White House to try to get calmer heads to prevail, to try to start a dialog, to try to ensure that the peace process is put back on track. That was done 5 weeks before his reelection. I think that took an inordinate amount of courage for him to do it.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu said, what else do you expect the President of the United States to do? He tried to bring the parties together. That is what he has done in terms of his leadership.

In Iraq, I was one of those Democrats that broke with my party and supported President Bush on the Persian Gulf war. Frankly, if President Bush's administration had done the job it was supposed to do, we would have been rid of Saddam Hussein. Many of us could not understand why he was allowed to stay in power after American triumphs in the Persian Gulf war.

And so now I think it ill behooves Senator Dole and others to point fingers and criticize when, quite frankly, during those days leading up to the Persian Gulf war, when this House had the great courage and the Senate did as well to pass my resolution declaring Jerusalem the undivided capital of Israel, it was Senator Dole back in those days of 1990 who criticized it, said he had been to Arab capitals and all the Arab leaders wanted to talk about was this terrible resolution which should not have been passed. One of the so-called Arab leaders that he spoke with in those days traveled to Baghdad and spoke with Saddam Hussein and was very concerned about what Saddam Hussein thought.

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And then several months later we were battling him in the Persian Gulf; so frankly I do not think that Bob Dole is in any kind of position to criticize President Clinton in that regard.

Northern Ireland; we can go on and on. The President has tried very, very hard to say that the United States needs to play a leadership role, I think in world affairs. And again Senator Dole when he was here was cutting back foreign aid, cutting back American involvement overseas.

I think we make a terrible mistake if we move back to the isolationist policies, as friends of my friends on the Republican side of the aisle seem to think, moving back 100 years ago. When communism collapsed, suddenly many of my friends on the other side of the aisle did not think the United States ought to play a role, a major role, in world affairs. I think we need to be engaged if we are the leaders of the world, the leaders of the free world and the leaders of the world as we are. Then with leadership comes responsibility. No one anointed us the leader of the world; we claim that mantle, and we ought to act that way.

So I think we ought to be helping these countries, we ought to be doing

what we can. We cannot be the policemen of the world, but we need to pick and choose and show American determination and American leadership, and that is what this President has done, and that is why I support him.

CAN GOVERNMENT THRIVE IN SUNSHINE?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALKER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for my last speech very saddened by the fact that I have to ask the question: Am I too idealistic for government, or is government possible without—can you possibly relate to values and character and disclosure? Can government ever be anything other than a fungus? Can it thrive in sunshine? I tend to believe it can. But I want to tell you I came in with difficulties with the Defense Department, and I leave with the same frustration and difficulties with the Defense Department. It is now under my own party, and they are probably happier to see me leave than anybody, even on the other side of the aisle. How saddened I am that their real message to me is:

You are leaving. We do not care. Good-bye. We are not even going to answer inquiries.

Now for 6 months almost we have been asking the Defense Department about why they would deploy high ranking officials to the Speaker's office. We have asked that and asked that and asked that. They have stonewalled and stonewalled.

Then we add a Freedom of Information Act, and what did I get? I got their memo talking about how the Speaker had requested these high quality officers in his thing. Then I got a wonderful four pages, totally blacked out, and the rest of it was copies of my letters to them.

Now, this is treating me like I have the brain of a gnat. You think that if they are sitting over there with over 20,000 employees and that kind of arrogance: we do not care what the law is, we are going to do what we want; this saddens me very much, and I think it only breeds cynicism about what happens to people when they come here.

I remind them that I thought they worked for the Commander in Chief. He put out a memo on what department heads and agencies were supposed to do with the Freedom of Information Act. I remind them I thought they worked under Janet Reno and her memo about what you are supposed to do with the Freedom of Information Act and that kind of information.

How classified could this information be? I mean please. These memos all say that, if one sentence is classified, you are not to blank out the whole page. Well, tell that to the Defense Department.

Furthermore, how classified is that that public regulations in the House and public regulations in the Defense

Department, which clearly deny the use of military officers for partisan purposes when they are being requested; the Joint Chiefs then send them over? That is not classified. That is not any great secret. I guess the only secret is if other Members of Congress find out this happened, they too may request officers in their office. And where does this all end?

That is why this is so dangerous.

Look, a lot of people liked it when they grow up playing with soldiers, little tin soldiers; but we are not supposed to be able to requisition fully funded taxpayer soldiers to play with in your office. This is not GI Joe. This is a legislative body.

So, obviously, what this has done was one more way the Pentagon lobbies on this Hill. They lobby on this Hill in a way that no other agency can, and people will be outraged if any other agency did. Yet, they get by with it, and I think it is very sad that they would duck the Freedom of Information Act, duck the memos from the Attorney General, duck the memos from the President and do their total blackout on something that I cannot imagine has one classified secret that you could even dream of in there.

I think all this is is protecting their backside. All this is is saying that that woman will go back to Colorado, and we will not have to deal with her, and no one else will take this up. Well, I hope other Members in this body take it up because I think, once you start allowing the military to come into political offices, I do not care if they are Republican or Democratic offices, and sit around to use military strategy to figure out how you declare partisan war on the other side, that is a shock. I think the taxpayers would find that shocking. I do not think they think we pay military officers to engage in partisan political games. I think they think they are paying them to do something in an entirely different non-partisan way.

So I hope these lines do not ever get blurred again. We have seen a tremendous blurring of them, and we have seen the Defense Department stonewalling and defending them and defending their right to do it. But as I leave here, I certainly hope somebody picks this up and we put this to bed.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mrs. SCHROEDER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ENGEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. SCHROEDER, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)